



Testimony in Support of HB 2103

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Oregon Nurses Association

Chair Greenlick and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2103 on behalf of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) and Nurse Practitioners of Oregon (NPO). NPO was established as an interest group within ONA in 1977 to enhance and at times maintain Oregon's progressive Nurse Practitioner (NP) practice.

HB 2103 would allow Oregon's NPs to perform vasectomies. Oregon's Nurse Practitioners have earned broad authority, practicing independently in both primary and specialty care. Nurse Practitioners diagnose and treat illness, prescribe and dispense medication, order and interpret tests and provide comprehensive care to their patients—all with comparable outcomes to their physician colleagues. Studies show that, with proper didactic training and education, NPs even match physicians on invasive procedures, like chest tube placement, bedside incision, placing arterial lines, intubation, and biopsies. Vasectomies are not qualitatively different from many other procedures NPs perform regularly. In fact, Nurse Practitioners compare well to their physician colleagues on other urology procedures, like ultrasound-guided prostate biopsy.

Vasectomies are more effective, safer, less invasive, and more affordable than permanent birth control options available for women. Unfortunately, they are underutilized in Oregon, in part because we do not currently have enough providers performing the procedure—patients are waiting for up to three months for a vasectomy appointment in rural and urban areas throughout the state. Despite the fact that the Oregon State Board of Nursing has stated that vasectomies fall within the scope of practice of a Nurse Practitioner who has undergone proper didactic education and training, Oregon's Nurse Practitioners have been specifically prohibited by law from performing the procedure. HB 2103 removes this outdated prohibition, creating more equity within the health care workforce and increasing access to a safe and effective family planning procedure for Oregonians.

Passage of HB 2103 would align Oregon with Washington State and Alaskan Nurse Practitioners, who have been performing vasectomies since at least 1996 when the U.S. Public Health Service Office of Population Affairs funded a vasectomy training project for NPs in those states.

Expanding the number of procedures NPs are authorized to perform can improve health care delivery while also reducing costs and increasing access to care for Oregonians. With appropriate education, training and if necessary, health system credentialing, Oregon's NPs can safely perform vasectomies, and help to meet the current demand for the procedure. ONA and NPO urge your support of HB 2103.